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ABSTRACT

Findings of research seeking predictors of mature creative achievement in the early artistic development of the Swiss painter, Paul Klee; the French painter, Henri Toulouse-Lautrec; and the Spanish painter and sculptor, Pablo Picasso are presented. Discussion is organized into four sections. The first section offers an overview, rationale, and summary of the research. The second section presents material which illustrates the normal developmental aspects of graphic growth for each of the three artists. The third section illustrates aspects of the apprenticeship process for each of the three, and the fourth section presents those aspects of the record which suggest the presence of significant creative potential. In all three cases juvenalia was defined as material completed up to the age of 20 years. Findings indicated that, when young, all three artists experienced difficulties in mastering spatial organization, proportion, and line control. All copied from popular sources, such as comic strips and calendars. All three had a repertoire of stereotyped images which they used for their own private purposes, like other normal children. Comparison with normal children reveals that the three are distinguished by accelerated acquisition of the graphic stages. In general, thematic preferences evident in the artists' juvenile work were evident in their mature works. (RH)

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Normal and exceptional aspects of artistic development in the juvenalia of Klee, Toulouse-Lautrec and Picasso

The purpose of this paper is to illustrate some findings based on my previous research on the juvenile work of Klee, Lautrec and Picasso (Pariser, 1985,1987). The research was aimed at finding out what, if anything, in the early artistic development of these three individuals, was a predictor of significant creative achievement in the visual arts. The underlying assumptions and definitions upon which this work was based, were two-fold: First, there was the assumption that significant creativity is manifested when an individual reshapes the intellectual domain in which they are operating. Gardner (1988) using Feldman's (1980) concept of domains of knowledge, offers a definition of significant creativity which covers the concept of creativity as it was used in this research. Gardner proposes five criteria which identify an innovation as creative: 1) The products created must be incorporated into the field; 2) The invention is non-accidental, that is, the individual has a history of creative activity; 3) The innovation is specific to a given domain of knowledge; 4) The individual is occupied with finding problems rather than solutions, and is also preoccupied with fashioning products of scope and power; 5) The invented product must be accepted into more than just one cultural setting.

The second working assumption underlying this research was that in order to understand the genesis of outstandingly creative individuals, one needs to use a case-study rather than a psychometric approach. Psychologists like Gruber (1982,1988) and Feldman (1980) advocate an approach which works backwards from an effect to a cause. That is, they suggest that one may learn a great deal about the special character of the gifted individual by looking at his/her life history. The methodology of

the present research is based on Gruber's suggestion that one examine the genesis of creative individuals, by retracing their developmental steps. Perhaps, in so doing, one may uncover the special qualities which identify the gifted individual.

The paper which follows is organized into four sections. The first section gives an overview, rationale and summary of the research. The second section presents material which illustrates the normal developmental aspects of graphic growth for each of the three artists. The third section illustrates aspects of the apprenticeship process for each of the three artists. Bloom's (1985) model of artistic apprenticeship is proposed, as a normative framework against which to consider the tutoring process. The fourth section presents those aspects of the record which suggest the presence of significant creative potential. For the purposes of the discussion, two models of significant psychological development will be employed: Feldman and Goldsmith's (1986) description of the prodigiously able child, and Gardner's (1988) a-synchrony model of significant creativity. (Gardner proposes that creative activity is the product of dissonance both within the individual and between the individual and aspects of his milieu.)

SECTION 1: OVERVIEW

Why were these artists chosen? There were three good reasons: 1) There is a lot of material available to document their very early work; 2) The artists did re-shape the fields of draughtsmanship and painting; 3) Draughtsmanship is an important component of their mature work. Thus, one may be able to observe connections between childhood graphics and adult work. Such connections are more easily identified than those which might

exist between juvenile sketches and the mature work of an artist who became, for example, a colour-field painter.

What are the sources for the juvenalia? In all three cases Juvenalia was defined as material completed up to the age of twenty. A fair amount of material is available for each of the three artists. For Klee, the most useful material is found in Glaesemer's (1973) catalogue. There is also an extensive collection of childhood and youthful material in Klee's birthplace, Bern (at the Kunst Museum). Lautrec's earliest work is well documented in the Dortu (1971) catalogue. Additionally there is juvenile material preserved in La Maison Natale in Albi, France. Picasso's childhood drawings are reproduced in Zervos (1950) and also in the catalogue of the Picasso Museum in Barcelona (1984). All of these sources were consulted, and where possible, xeroxes of photographs were made.

Once the raw data had been collected, how was it treated? The raw data consisted of several thousand images in books, xeroxes, or photographs. These images were examined from a number of perspectives: 1) What were the juvenile artists' thematic preferences?

2) In what ways did these children's drawings distinguish themselves from the drawings of normal children--particularly in respect to graphic development?

3) Were there any truly extraordinary products?

4) What appeared to be the impact of the family, popular culture, and high culture?

5) What was the relationship of early themes and performance skills to the mature work?

What were the findings? The most important finding was that, even

knowing the eventual prodigious development of a given individual, it is not possible to identify the genius in each and every sketch and drawing. These children, like everyone else, put on their pants one leg at a time -- which is to say that in all three cases, one can trace out a normal trajectory of graphic development. All three children experienced difficulties in master spatial organization, proportion, line control. All three children copied from popular sources such as comic strips and calendars. All three children had a repertoire of stereotyped images, which they used like other normal children for their own private purposes.

In a nutshell, if one compares the graphic development of these children with normal children, one finds acceleration of the acquisition of graphic stages. For Picasso and Lautrec, the learning curve is steep but it covers the same territory as that in ordinary children. Here it is worth noting that none of the three neophyte artists was as able a draughtsman as the autistic child, Nadia (Selfe, 1977). When one looks at Nadia's drawings at age four or five (Figure 1), one observes truly anomalous graphic development. Nadia's work is qualitatively different from what Picasso, Lautrec or Klee were producing at the same age. Of course, Picasso is quoted as saying that, ...When I was a child, I drew like Raphael; it has taken me all my life to draw like a child (O'Brian, 1976). This statement, in my view, is an impish claim, unsubstantiated by the drawing record left behind by Picasso. As an illustration, one can refer to one of the earliest drawings by Picasso: a study of a statue of Hercules (Figure 2). Drawn when Picasso was age nine, it is an accomplished drawing for a young child. But it is still a far cry from the elegance of Nadia's horse drawings at age six.

In terms of thematic preferences reflected in childhood work, the following general trends were observed (Figure 3). Of Klee's total output, 75% of his drawings consisted of landscape and architectural objects. The remainder of his drawings were divided between studies of animals and people. (A study by Verdi (1984) places considerable emphasis on the significance of these early nature studies. Klee's mature work reflects his continuing passionate interest in the natural world--an interest which can be traced back to his earliest sketches at ages five and six).

Roughly two-thirds of Lautrec's juvenile work consists of drawings related to animals and to figure studies. Again this trend agrees with his mature interest in capturing action and gesture. The only significant shift in subject matter is that after age eighteen, the frequency with which Lautrec drew horses, declined.

In the case of Picasso, almost 75% of his juvenile drawings consists of figure studies; the remainder are almost all studies of spectacles such as bullfights, street scenes, etc. This also agrees with his mature choice of subject matter. In the broadest sense, the themes which were of interest to the mature artists announced themselves in their juvenile work.

SECTION 2: NORMAL ASPECTS OF GRAPHIC DEVELOPMENT

Children's normal graphic development has been described by Arnheim (1974), Lowenfeld (1957), Wolf & Perry (1988), and any of a number of other students of graphic evolution. One aspect which all descriptions have in common is that development is characterized by the shift from less to more differentiated representation. One feature of this shift is that typically, children begin by constructing representational images out of the agglutination of discrete graphic units. Thus a child might put together a

collection of marks and shapes in order to indicate a human figure. Later, as the child becomes more skilled, objects are no longer constructed out of disparate parts, but are encircled by a continuous flowing outline. This shift from agglutination to integration is nicely illustrated in a sequence of drawings taken from Fein (1976). Figure 4 shows how a young girl changed her approach to drawing horse's heads between the ages of four and six. The shift from a part-by-part to an integrated approach is plainly apparent. Thus, the first drawings show the head as separate and distinct from the torso: two parts are joined together. The drawing done at age five shows a residual division between head and neck. One can see that in this drawing, head, neck and body are in the process of being subsumed by a single flowing line. The drawing done at age eight leaves no doubt that the units head and neck have been subsumed under a single outline. This process is, I believe, a prototypical feature of normal graphic development.

There exist several drawings by Klee and Lautrec which demonstrate that they, too, passed through the agglutinative drawing stage. For example, there are two drawings (Figures 5, 6), one by Klee and one by Lautrec which both show a train. The Klee drawing (Figure 5) shows a Christmas scene with a flying Christ-child. Underneath the tree one sees a toy train. This object is rendered by a series of circles stacked up on each other. A similar object appears in a drawing done by the seven-year-old Lautrec (Figure 6). In Lautrec's sketch one can observe a train passing over a viaduct or bridge. Both Klee and Lautrec have employed the same simplified formula for representing the train. The renderings are agglutinative, and as such are suggestive traces of the less differentiated stage of graphic evolution through which both children are passing.

Another feature of the Klee and Lautrec drawings which is typical of the work of ordinary children, is the presence of multiple skill levels. For example, as we have seen, Lautrec's train is constructed in a primitive fashion but if we now look at the equestrian figures in the same drawing (especially the horses), we see that they are remarkably sophisticated: horse and rider are encompassed by a sweeping outline. In Klee's drawing there is a similar disparity between the drawing of the Christ child and the drawing of the toy train. Such inconsistencies in handling are typical of most young children's work.

Two drawings by Lautrec and Picasso (Figures 7 & 8) show how the constraints of development predisposed both children to adapt similar solutions. Both children drew birds in flight. Figure 7 by the nine-year-old Lautrec shows sparrows in flight. A drawing by Picasso, (Figure 8), also age nine, shows a pigeon flying. Both children have tried to solve the difficult problem of showing a bird with outstretched wings. How is this to be done without occluding the wings with each other or with the body? The problem requires some kind of occlusion if the drawing is to be realistic. There are many solutions if the bird's anatomy can be altered to suit the needs of clarity. Picasso and Lautrec seem to have hit upon the same one: they show both wings in their fullest extension. Lautrec, in a slightly less controlled drawing (Figure 7) joins the occluded wing to the bird's back and thereby preserves important information concerning the bird's two wings. With these bird drawings we can see how the two children have hit upon compositional solutions which are standard for most children acquiring graphic mastery.

Klee's childhood drawings yield up other examples of images constructed

on the basis of the addition of parts. A drawing by Klee (Figure 9) at age six, shows two figures running after each other. The left-hand figure reveals clearly how Klee constructed it--the two legs are not a part of an integrated outline, but are additions. The leg furthest behind is in fact oddly attached to the small of the person's back. Here again we find evidence of additive construction.

Another drawing, Lady with Parasol, is an expressive sketch which also employs an additive approach to figure construction (Figure 10). The arm on the far side of the lady's body is added as a part. Klee has had to face much the same problem as Picasso and Lautrec--how to show a limb when the body is interposed. Klee's solution, like that of the other two children, is to show the arm in its fullest extension. The awkward result is, however, that the arm appears to originate in the lady's belly. At this point in Klee's development, the issue in picture making is not accurate optical rendering, but completeness. By way of illustration how normal Klee's solution is, we can look at a drawing done by a contemporary six-year-old which also shows a lady holding an umbrella (Figure 11). Virginia has hit upon the same solution as Klee, and the end result is an awkward sketch in which the arm furthest away from the viewer appears to be coming out of the woman's stomach. In comparing the two drawings, we can see how Klee and Virginia had the same difficulty in constructing similar figures. Such difficulty arises from the use of the agglutinative method of putting together an image.

Having looked at some traces of normal drawing development in the childhood work of the three artists, we can turn to adolescent work. Using the descriptions of normal adolescent graphic development proposed by

Gardner (1980), Lowenfeld (1957), and others, as a scaffold against which to measure the adolescent work of the three artists, one observes that many of their concerns with skill acquisition and subject matter were quite normal. Thus, all three artists acquired perspective mastery in the standard sequence. For each artist it is possible to find a chronological sequence of drawings which explore illusionistic space, first with experiments with multiple baselines, later with isometric renderings and finally drawings which demonstrate an understanding of vanishing points and one-point perspective. Three drawings taken from the Lautrec archive should make this point. Around age 7 (as in Figure 6), spatial depth is suggested simply by stacking the figures up on the picture surface. By the age of 10, Lautrec is already playing with isometric perspective (as we can see in his sketches of boats (Figures 12a & 12b). Finally, by age 11 or so, the sketches in his school notebook reveal that he has grasped the basics of one-point perspective (Figure 12c).

Like other adolescents, all three artists copied images from the popular press. Lautrec copied the work of the French illustrator Grandville (see Figures 13,14,15) Picasso copied the style of Spanish broadsheets, and covered the margins of his school books with grotesque caricatures borrowed from the media (Figure 16). Klee also copied from popular images and his favorite sources were copybooks and calendar tear sheets (Figures 17a & 17b). Here again, these borrowings are typical of the work of young adolescents.

SECTION 3: NORMAL ASPECTS OF APPRENTICESHIP

Having suggested some of the findings which concern the normal developmental aspects of these three artists' drawing skill, let us turn to

the social dimensions of their apprenticeship. What about the role of family and teachers?

Bloom (1985) studied 120 talented individuals in the fields of piano, sculpture, neurological research, swimming, tennis and mathematics. He, like Feldman, observed what a powerful influence teachers exert on the expression of talent. Bloom's study outlines the stages through which specially gifted individuals come to master a discipline. Sosniak (in Bloom, 1985) summarizes the three stages of the learning process as it exists for talented pianists:

The first phase of play and romance is a period during which there is an enormous encouragement of interest and involvement, stimulation, freedom to explore and immediate rewards. The second phases, of precision and discipline, is a period during which skill, technique, and the habit of accuracy are dominant. The third phase of generalization and integration is a period during which the development of individuality and insight, and the realization that music can be a significant part of one's life, come to the fore. (p.343)

Parallel to these shifts in the learning climate, i.e. the change from 1) romance with the subject; 2) discipline and technique to 3) the development of individuality, insight and generalization, there are shifts in the sorts of teachers most appropriate to each phase. Bloom characterizes the teachers who work with children during the first phase of talent development as, ...good with people, fond of children, but not particularly distinguished in the discipline. (p.479)

During the second stage of talent development, the intervention of a less "humane", more demanding teacher is required. Warmth and empathy become less important than high technical expectations. (The army drill sergeant might be a good caricature of such an intermediate teacher). The third stage of talent development requires a great deal more from the

student whose task it now becomes to "create" his or her own unique vision. The teacher still needs to be highly skilled, a master, but the individual students must begin to take responsibility for their own career.

In many ways, Bloom's tripartite model provides a good framework for describing the apprenticeship of our three artists.

To start with, there were significant differences in the sort of support which each artist got from his family. Klee's family tried to dissuade him from studying the visual arts. The family was involved with music, and Klee, by age eleven, was offered a position with the Bern orchestra. The only people who briefly encouraged the young Klee to make pictures were his grandmother and his uncle. Picasso's father Don Jose Ruiz Blasco, wanted to turn his son into a successful academic artist. For this reason Picasso was schooled carefully by his father in the use of all kinds of standard graphic techniques. By the same token, Don Jose made sure that Pablo attended a number of Spanish art academies in Corunna, Barcelona and Madrid. Toulouse Lautrec was raised as a "free" artistic spirit. His family, being wealthy landed aristocrats, had an amateur's love of drawing and the plastic arts. Lautrec's mother encouraged him to draw, but certainly had no professional expectations. Lautrec's father was a high-living eccentric who did not approve of his son's artistic interests. But, as Lautrec's mother and father separated when Lautrec was still a child, Lautrec senior had little influence on his son.

In the case of Lautrec, Klee and Picasso, it is possible to describe their periods of apprenticeship in terms of Bloom's model. During the initial "romantic" phase of learning, Lautrec had a special relationship with a painter named René Princeteau. Princeteau was a specialist in horse

portraiture, and he took a special liking to Lautrec, who was also obsessed by horses--as his notebooks and copybooks reveal. Princeteau was perhaps drawn close to Lautrec inasmuch as both master and pupil suffered from a handicap: by puberty Lautrec was effectively crippled, and Princeteau was a deaf-mute. By the time Lautrec reached his late adolescence, it was evident to Princeteau that his young pupil had gone beyond him. Princeteau urged Lautrec to study and learn in the ateliers of the academic painters in Paris--Lautrec therefore entered the second phase of the talent process (the period of precision and discipline) at the urging of his first teacher. During this second period, Lautrec's masters were Bonnat and then Cormon. There is also some speculation that Lautrec may have studied in the atelier of Gerôme. During this period Lautrec executed, with much energy and care, hundreds of figure studies. These studies are very competent from a technical standpoint, but totally impersonal. To all intents, Lautrec never apprenticed himself to a master/teacher--the event which marks the third phase of Bloom's schema for talent development. Lautrec most assuredly admired some French painters--the most important of these was Degas--but he was never his apprentice. Klee's immediate family did not encourage his artistic interests. For a short while he had support from his grandmother, but her death while Klee was still a child, left him, in his own words, "an artistic orphan." With the death of his grandmother, Klee entered into the second phase of talent development. From late childhood until well into late adolescence, Klee was a self-taught artist. He improved his drawing skills by copying from calendar illustrations, and from the pages of books intended to provide artists with models to imitate. The drawings which Klee produced during this period held little or no interest for him as a mature

artist, whereas his childhood work was of special interest to Klee. At age nineteen, Klee took matters into his own hands and went to study art in Munich. In Germany he studied with Franz Stuck and Knirr. Thus, Klee began the period of skill-learning on his own, but finished this period in the ateliers of some well-known academic painters.

Picasso's initial phase of artistic learning took place with his father. During the period of "romance", Bloom notes that the first teacher need not be a particularly brilliant practitioner, but needs to be "empathetic". Don Jose conforms to this model quite well. Like Princeteau, Don Jose could see that his pupil was very apt, so he arranged for Pablo to take classes in a number of Spanish art academies. Here again, as with Lautrec, the young artist rose to the occasion and drew with great speed and accuracy. The drill and grind of academic drawing was a welcome challenge, but beyond the second stage, it is hard to say who functioned as Picasso's master/teacher. Picasso clearly achieved the third stage task identified by Bloom--that is, the beginnings of the quest for autonomy. He turned his back on his father, no longer used his patronym in signing and began to experiment with the non-academic styles he encountered in Paris.

SECTION 4: PRODIGIOUS AND CREATIVE TRAITS

What has been proposed thus far is that these three artists shared many of the traits of "ordinary" children as they acquired drawing skills in late childhood and adolescence. There is, however, little about the material discussed which illuminates the fact that all three individuals rose to great prominence in the visual arts; that is, there is nothing about the sequence in which skills such as object rendering or perspective, were acquired, which is truly anomalous or noteworthy. Likewise, the three

adolescents use of popular images such as postcards or caricatures is absolutely indistinguishable from similar strategies in ordinary adolescents. Nor is there anything exceptional about the sequence of tutors and instructors who worked with the three artists. Nevertheless, there are some aspects of the drawing record which do appear exceptional: 1) The capacity for rapid, fluent and technically accurate work is plainly manifest in Lautrec's and Picasso's output; 2) The capacity for great ease in imitating both style and subject matter is something which we can observe in the early work of Lautrec and Picasso; 3) An unusual phenomenon which I have only observed in the childhood record left behind by Lautrec--is the serendipitous coincidence of his gift for linear expression and access to a medium (pen and ink) which provides the necessary impetus for mastery of expressive linear technique. To put it more generally, there appears to be a natural meshing between a potential ability and a propitious environment which permits the ability to manifest itself. For Lautrec, the creative catalyst was the discovery of fluid media like water color and pen and ink. We are now going to look at each of these three indices one by one. Having presented these special characteristics, I will introduce two psychological models: one of "the prodigy" (Feldman and Goldsmith, 1986) and the other of the significantly creative individual (Gardner, 1988). These two models can help to organize some of the material collected and discussed, and also help to point out directions for further research. The two models are related to each other inasmuch as Gardner proposes that where a prodigy (according to Feldman and Goldsmith) requires a happy coincidence of intellectual potential and environmental support (i.e. family and culture), the significantly creative individual requires a kind of friction between innate

gifts and the environment.¹ (Gardner refers to this as a-synchrony). Equally important is the observation made by Feldman and Goldsmith that, more often than not, prodigies have failed to contribute much to their field of endeavour. In the case of the three artists under study, we are dealing with individuals who have made a real impact on the domain of the fine arts, and we may therefore suspect the presence of significant a-synchronies.

1. Rapidity and ease in mastering techniques. This trait is most certainly true of Picasso and Lautrec. Ease of technical acquisition was the hallmark of Picasso's childhood and adolescent career. From adolescence onwards Picasso was able to make drawings rapidly and surely, where the same task would have cost another artist much time and labour. The stories which tell of how he got into art school in La Corunna and Madrid, dwell on the fact (somewhat hazily documented) that in a matter of days he was able to execute a series of rigorous academic entrance drawings which normally required several weeks to complete. There is even a suggestion that Picasso had unusual powers of visualization. O'Brian describes how Picasso could make a mural without any hesitation, as though he were tracing lines already inscribed on the wall. "(Picasso's)...way of drawing a nude, starting with a toe, and sweeping around with one sure unfaltering line" (p.77). One can witness the same remarkable fluency and assurance when one sees the film "Le Mystere de Picasso" by the French director Clouzot. For all its silly verbal and musical hocus-pocus, the film leaves one in no doubt as to

¹"Creative individuals often are marked by an anomalous pattern of intelligences, by a tension between intellectual and personality styles, and by a striking lack of fit between personality and domain, intelligence and field, and biological constitution and choice of career. Indeed, it sometimes appears as if the very lack of fit served as a primary motivation...to fashion a creative product." (Gardner, 1988a, p.320)

Picasso's ability to spew out images and transform them with Protean skill. Perhaps this sort of sureness is in part the end result of tireless practice.

Lautrec demonstrated a similar facility in the acquisition of technical skills, and the mastery of cultural formulae. For example, the story is told that Lautrec became so adept at drawing in Princeteau's style that the latter could not distinguish between drawings done by himself and those done by his pupil. At this point, Princeteau is said to have advised Lautrec to seek continuing instruction in the ateliers in Paris. Like Picasso, Lautrec enjoyed the challenge of academic drawing and produced numbers of academic nudes during his sojourn in the Parisian academies. Lautrec at one point wrote to his mother complaining about the lack of rigour which characterized his present master's (Cormon) approach: "My former master's (Bonnat) raps put ginger into one--and I didn't spare myself. Here I feel rather relaxed and find it an effort to make a conscientious drawing when something not quite as good would do as well in Cormon's eyes" (Lautrec, quoted in Mack (1941, p.56). Lautrec wanted and enjoyed the most demanding standards. His unusual technical abilities required the challenge of academic drudgery. Lautrec's childhood equestrian drawings are strong evidence that his graphic technical abilities were well above the norms expected of children. There is some evidence of Lautrec's remarkable fluency and ease of ideation in a series of sketches made in what must have been a few moments of boredom during his adolescent tutorial sessions. In his French/Latin dictionary we find evidence of an outburst of humorous creative activity (Figures 18,19,20,21,22). Over a sequence of five pages we can see the young artist playing with variations on a theme. In rapid-fire succession Lautrec

conjures up pairs of acrobats who balance and perch precariously on the line which divides the dictionary page. The characters assume contorted poses and make faces at the audience. Looking over these drawing we can see the quick line, the sureness of execution and the ready invention which are the hallmarks of Lautrec's style. These drawings are testimony to one of the special components of artistic giftedness--fluency and the production of multiple novel solutions. Picasso's and Lautrec's performance in this respect are close to what one might consider prodigious.

2. The ability to imitate: Facility in mastering styles. This skill which in lesser artists could as easily be manifested in the capacity for forgery, is strongly in evidence in the work of Picasso and Lautrec. Both artists were able to "acquire" a style. Picasso has left much evidence of this special ability. While in Madrid he worked in the manner of El Greco (of whom Don Jose did not approve), Velasquez and Goya; once in Barcelona, Picasso assimilated the mannerisms of Spanish art nouveau (or Modernismo) and he worked in the style of Isidro Nonell, and Ramon Casas (Blunt & Pool, 1962). Later in Paris he produced Lautrecs and Bonnards. What is so striking about Picasso's imitative gift is that he could produce images which were excellent direct copies (as in his copy of a Velasquez portrait), and he could also produce new work in the manner of any given artist. This is the case with his Toulouse-Lautrec dance hall scenes. The "Lautrec" canvases are none of them copies; they are masterful renderings in the manner of an artist whom he admired greatly, and who, coincidentally, died the year after Picasso came to Paris (1901).

Lautrec, too, was a gifted imitator. Lassaigue and Gloeckner (1939), in their biography of Lautrec, report that Princeteau was so impressed by

Lautrec's imitative powers that he referred to him as a "regular little ape" (p.21). As we have seen (Figures 13,14,15), the child Lautrec was attracted to the work of a contemporary French illustrator with the pseudonym Grandville. Grandville specialized in bizarre and even grotesque imagery. From the drawings reproduced in Dortu (1971), it seems that Lautrec returned from time to time to the fantasies he found in Grandville and perfected his rendering. Scattered throughout the collection of Lautrec's early work are eight drawings which, by their style, content and arrangement, are clearly derived from Grandville. These bizarre drawings show human figures in 19th Century garb, sporting animal heads. (This style was to influence Tenniel, the illustrator of the Alice stories). In the case of two Lautrec studies, it is clear that he was working hard to copy or develop a Grandville-like image (Figures 13 & 14). Lautrec, at age eleven or so, drew a riverbank scene where a duck-headed creature pulls another half-human creature crowned with a rabbit's head across the stream in a bird's nest. There exists a Grandville illustration in the collection by Adhémar (1965) (Figure 15), which shows a duck pulling a hare across a river in a bird's nest. The picture is titled "Hare and the Wild Duck", (p.776) and this may also be the title of a French fable. Lautrec's figures are typical Grandville personages, and their position in the near foreground is very similar to Grandville's arrangement. In his early manhood, Lautrec retained his imitative gift and on one occasion used it to make an accomplished parody of a mannered academic painting by Puvis de Chavannes. The parody was technically excellent and quite impertinent in tone. In the same spirit Lautrec thumbed his nose at the professors who examined him for his Baccalaureate by inventing a spurious Greek passage which the learned

gentlemen were loath to admit they did not know.

Again, as with the trait of fluency, Picasso's ability to imitate verges on the prodigious. Lautrec has left behind less evidence of outstanding ability in this area, but as we have seen, he could and did copy with some success. In Klee's case, there is little evidence of extraordinary copying and imitating ability.

3. The serendipitous meshing of special ability and a medium. This sort of "meshing" has been described by Feldman and Goldsmith in their discussion of the way in which prodigies "gravitated" towards domains in which they had superlative abilities. For example, chess prodigies are noted to have asked for chess sets as gifts without being thoroughly acquainted with the game. They appeared to be naturally disposed to understand and play the game. In the case of Lautrec, one can observe a dramatic change in the quality of his drawings at the point when he begins to use pen and ink. The drawings which he has been making up to his tenth year (approximately) have been mostly in pencil, charcoal, or crayon. These drawings of animals and men in uniform are characterized by a certain awkwardness of line and execution. The awkwardness is not simply at the level of anatomy and articulation, but also at the level of the authority with which line is handled. It is as though it is only when Lautrec begins to use a fluid medium, that he discovers his potential for fluid energetic line. In this respect, one may be reminded of Nadia, the autistic child who would only do her extraordinary drawings of horses and people if she was provided with a ball point pen (Selfe, 1977). If Nadia was given a crayon, or some other drawing implement which made broad marks, her drawings were clumsy and unremarkable dawks. The fine line of the ballpoint provided Nadia with necessary feedback for generating her

remarkable images. A sequence of drawings by Lautrec may help to illustrate the efflorescence of his abilities. Three pencil drawings, one of a horse and jockey (Figure 23), one of a mare and foal (Figure 24), and one of a mounted soldier in full dress (Figure 25), (all drawn at ten years of age), reveal a tentative, choppy line. Yet, a brush drawing of a steeple chase done during the same period (Figure 26), is considerably more successful. This brush drawing shows Lautrec's ability to make gestural marks, marks which are vital and which augment the impact of the subject. With his fluid study of the steeple chase, we get a sense of Lautrec's "impressionistic line". An appealing conjecture is that the flowering of imagery which one observes in Lautrec's school composition books is, in part, the result of his introduction to pen and ink. Thus, in the case of Lautrec, one has the record of the interaction of his particular talent with a medium whose characteristics fully potentiate his special ability. I have not been able to find a record of a similar flowering, triggered by a medium, in the work of Klee or Picasso.

What we can detect in the childhood record of Klee, Lautrec and Picasso is a varied mix of "prodigiousness" and a-synchrony.

The rapid acquisition of skills and achievement of very high levels of mastery as exemplified by the young Picasso suggests prodigious talent. Likewise the sudden flowering of Lautrec's active and fluid line also suggests an innate disposition which propitious circumstances brought to fruition. Feldman and Goldsmith propose that prodigious ability, contrary to popular belief requires extreme nurturance. It is an error to believe that "genius will out". They insist on the delicate relationship between abilities and social circumstances which permit the expression of those

abilities:

One of the myths about prodigies is that their talents are so overwhelming, that they will be fulfilled regardless of what happens in their environment. My experience with prodigies makes it clear that precisely the opposite is true. The more powerful and specific the gift, the more the need for active, sustained, specialized intervention from those who are responsible for the child's development. (p.123)

Certainly Picasso conforms most closely to the model of the prodigy for not only are his skills and abilities the most surprising, but his education and upbringing were carefully orchestrated by his father. No effort was spared to shape and mould the young artist. Klee and Lautrec did not manifest the same high-level skills nor were they the recipients of concentrated artistic tutelage. As a child, Lautrec did receive lessons from Princeteau, but Klee was self-taught.

The a-synchronies which Gardner's model suggests are also present for each artist, but they lie as much in the emotional and the interpersonal realm as in the areas of intelligence, development and skill acquisition. Picasso's difficulties are well known: although he had much native intelligence, he hated school, and although he owed all of his early artistic education to his father, at the age of nineteen he ceased using his father's name in signing his canvasses. His aggressions against the vestiges of 19th Century academic art are well documented, and have provided grist for many psychological mills (Ehrenwald, 1963).

With Lautrec, we can find aspects of the prodigy. His drawings of horses are truly noteworthy. They bespeak a level of technical skill which is very rare in children of his age. Dynamic mis-matches or a-synchronies are also present in abundance. First and foremost there is Lautrec's physical disability, which enforced a period of adolescent convalescence.

During this time his drawing skills grew. Lautrec, like Picasso, found academic schooling distasteful, although he was a more apt pupil than the Spaniard. Another significant tension exists between Lautrec's highly compromised physical mobility and his fluid and aggressive line. This line was as mobile and fluid as he himself was locked into graceless physical movement.

Klee's childhood record is the least prodigious of the three. Although his drawings are full of character, there is nothing about them in terms of technical command which suggests a prodigious talent. But Klee faced perhaps the biggest "a-synchrony" of all three artists. He had a real drive to become a visual artist, yet his musician parents would have none of it, and in fact actively dissuaded him from a career as a visual artist. It was only after a childhood and adolescence spent as a self-taught draughtsman that Klee took the final step and left Bern for Munich in order to study the visual arts seriously--with or without the blessing of his family.

In all three cases we can see aspects of both the prodigy and the significantly creative individual, impelled by inter-or intra-psychological tensions to reshape the domain of the visual arts. In future work, I hope to pull together more material which will flesh out the sketch suggested here. In particular, it should be possible to develop a profile of each artist which identifies three significant elements in their makeup: the normal, the prodigious, and the dissonant. It is these dissonances, be they inter- or intra-personal which according to Gardner may have put these three individuals at promise for being significantly creative people.

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